

Assignment 1 – Software Design and Modelling

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Contents

1	Project selection process	1
1.1	Projects Considered	1
1.2	The Jackson Core Library	1
2	Analysis Implementation	1
3	Structural Patterns	1
3.1	Singleton Pattern	1
3.2	Abstract Factory Pattern	2
3.3	Builder Pattern	2
4	Creational Patterns	2
4.1	Adapter Pattern	2
4.2	Decorator Pattern	2
4.3	Bridge Pattern	2
4.4	Composite Pattern	2
4.5	Facade Pattern	3
4.6	Proxy Pattern	3
5	Behavioral Patterns	3
5.1	Command Pattern	3
5.2	Observer Pattern	3
5.3	Strategy Pattern	3
5.4	State Pattern	3
5.5	Template Method Pattern	3
5.6	Visitor Pattern	4

Listings

1	Template method <i>void close()</i> and step methods <i>void _closeInput()</i> and <i>void _releaseBuffers()</i> in <code>base.ParserBase</code>	3
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1 Project selection process

We need to find a project that is a single unit in terms of compilation modules¹ self contained and with as little external dependencies as possible to ease the analysis project. Additionally, it would be nice if we choose a project that we already know as library clients.

1.1 Projects Considered

We considered the following GitHub repositories:

vavr-io/vavr a Java library for functional programming, discarded as the project is less than 20K LOC and doesn't meet the selection criteria;

bitcoin4j/bitcoin4j a Java implementation of the bitcoin protocol, discarded as the project is distributed in several subprojects;

FasterXML/jackson-core a Java JSON serialization and deserialization library. We chose this library because it meets the selection criteria, it doesn't rely on external components for its execution, and its project structure uses a single Maven module for its sources and thus easy to analyze.

1.2 The Jackson Core Library

As already mentioned, *Jackson* is a library that offers serialization and deserialization capabilities in JSON format. The library is highly extensible and customizable through a robust but flexible API and module suite that allows to change the serialization and deserialization rules, or in the case of the *jackson-dataformat-xml* module, to allow to target XML instead of JSON.

The chosen repository contains only the *core* module of Jackson. The *core* module implements the necessary library abstractions and interfaces to allow other modules to be plugged-in. Additionally, the *core* module implements the tokenizer and low-level abstractions to work with the JSON format.

We chose to analyze version 2.13.4 of the module (i.e. the code under the git tag *jackson-core-2.13.4*) because it is the latest stable version available at the time of writing.

2 Analysis Implementation

We use *Pattern4J* as a pattern detection tool. This tool needs compiled *.class* files in order to perform analysis. Therefore, as *jackson-core* is a standard Maven project, we compile the sources using the command *mvn clean compile*. The *pom.xml* of the library specifies Java 1.6 as a compilation target, which is not supported by JDK 17 or above. We used JDK 11 instead, as it is the previous LTS version.

An XML dump of the *Pattern4j* analysis results are included in the submission as the file *analysis.xml*.

3 Structural Patterns

3.1 Singleton Pattern

Lots of false positives for the Singleton pattern. Example, `com.fasterxml.jackson.core.sym.Name1` has a package private constructor and a public static final instance of it, but reading the documentation the class represents (short) JSON string literals and therefore is clearly initialized by client code.

(`com.fasterxml.jackson.core` omitted for brevity)

`sym.Name1`, `JsonLocation`, `DefaultIndenter`, `util.DefaultPrettyPrinter$FixedSpaceIndenter` not a singleton (detected cause of "convenient" default instance given as static final field), the constructor is not used but the class is extensible

`JsonPointer`, `filter.TokenFilter` like above, but constructors are protected

`JsonpCharacterEscapes`, `util.DefaultPrettyPrinter$NopIndenter`, `Version` a singleton but with a public constructor that is never called in the module code, may be called in tests

¹A problem for *Pattern4J* as compiled *.class* files are distributed across several directories and would have to be merged manually for analyzing them

io.JsonStringEncoder like above, but the class is final

util.InternCache, **io.CharTypes\$AltEscapes** actual singleton, thread-unsafe initialization

io.ContentReference like above, but constructor is protected

3.2 Abstract Factory Pattern

Pattern4J detects only two instances of the abstract factory pattern:

TokenStreamFactory which indeed is a factory for **JsonParser** and **JsonGenerator** objects, although two overloaded factory methods exist on this class (one for each class) catering for different combination of arguments. A concrete implementation of this factory is included in the form of the **JsonFactory** class, although other modules may add additional implementations to cater for different encodings (like the *jackson-dataformat-xml* module for XML);

TSFBuilder which is also a factory for concrete implementations of **TokenStreamFactory** to allow slight changes in the serialization and deserialization rules (e.g. changing the quote character used in JSON keys from " to '). Like **TokenStreamFactory**, this class is only implemented by one class, namely **JsonFactoryBuilder**, within the scope of this module. And as mentioned previously, this abstract factory is also likely to be extended by concrete implementations in other *Jackson* modules.

3.3 Builder Pattern

The builder pattern does not seem to be analyzed by *Pattern4J*, as the analysis output does not mention the pattern, even just to report that no instances of it have been found (as it is the case with other patterns, e.g. the observer pattern). A manual search in the source code produced the following results:

TSFBuilder is also a builder other than an abstract factory. As mentioned previously, this class allows to alter slightly the serialization and deserialization rules used to build outputting **JsonFactory** objects. Each rule is represented by an object or enum instance implementing the **util.JacksonFeature** interface. *TSFBuilder* then provides several overloaded methods to enable and disable features represented by the interface. Enabled features are stored in several bitmask *protected int* fields, which are then directly accessed by the constructor of the **TokenStreamFactory** concrete implementation to build;

JsonFactoryBuilder a concrete factory implementation of **TSFBuilder** that builds **JsonFactory** instances;

util.ByteArrayBuilder provides facilities to build *byte[]* objects of varying length, akin to **StringBuilder** building **String** objects. This is not a strict implementation of the builder pattern per se (as Java arrays do not have a "real" constructor), but it is nevertheless included since the features it exposes (namely dynamic sizing while building) are decoupled by the underlying (fixed-size) array representation.

4 Creational Patterns

4.1 Adapter Pattern

TBD

4.2 Decorator Pattern

Only in Pattern4j

4.3 Bridge Pattern

TBD

4.4 Composite Pattern

None found

4.5 Facade Pattern

TBD – *Pattern4J* does not detect this pattern

4.6 Proxy Pattern

None found

5 Behavioral Patterns

5.1 Command Pattern

None found

5.2 Observer Pattern

None found

5.3 Strategy Pattern

None found

5.4 State Pattern

Among the design patterns *Pattern4J* detects, the state pattern is detected in 5 classes. The state pattern is a variation of the strategy pattern where the concrete strategy used by the matching context is determined by the state of a finite state machine the context class implements. In other words, the state pattern chooses the concrete strategy to use through the state of the context.

util.DefaultPrettyPrinter false positive, strategy pattern;

JsonFactory false positive, *InputDecorator* *_inputDecorator*, *OutputDecorator* *_outputDecorator*, *SerializedString* *_rootValueSeparator* are strategy instances (more specifically a way to pre-process input before Jackson parses it, labeled as “decorator” by Jackson developers but not really a decorator pattern application since *InputDecorator* is not a subclass of any component to decorate);

json.WriterBasedJsonGenerator false positive, *SerializableString* *_currentEscape* is a simple *String*-like object that gets updated based on the parsing state.

WIP instances and examples

5.5 Template Method Pattern

Due to the extendibility of Jackson, it is of no surprise that the template method pattern is used extensively to create a class hierarchy that provides rich interfaces while maintaining behavioural flexibility. *Pattern4J* correctly detects several instances of the pattern, namely **JsonStreamContext**, **JsonGenerator**, **type.ResolvedType**, **JsonParser**, **base.ParserBase**, **base.GeneratorBase**, **base.ParserMinimalBase**. All these classes implement several concrete *public* methods through the use of *protected abstract* methods. Although the concrete (i.e. the template) methods are usually not vary complex (as the pattern example shown in class), they still follow the principles of the template method pattern. We show as an example some template methods found in **base.ParserBase**:

```
@Override public void close() throws IOException {
    if (!_closed) {
        // 19-Jan-2018, tatu: as per [core#440] need to ensure no more data
        // assumed available
        _inputPtr = Math.max(_inputPtr, _inputEnd);
        _closed = true;
        try {
            _closeInput();
        }
    }
}
```

```

    } finally {
        // as per [JACKSON-324], do in finally block
        // Also, internal buffer(s) can now be released as well
        _releaseBuffers();
    }
}

protected abstract void _closeInput() throws IOException;

protected void _releaseBuffers() throws IOException {
    /* implementation omitted */
}

```

Listing 1: Template method *void close()* and step methods *void _closeInput()* and *void _releaseBuffers()* in **base.ParserBase**.

Here the pattern is slightly modified by providing a default implementation of *void _releaseBuffers()*. In this case, child classes occasionally override the method with a body first calling *super()* and then adding additional buffer release code after.

5.6 Visitor Pattern

None found